



Saskatchewan
Agriculture
and Food

FINAL REPORT

BEEF DEVELOPMENT FUND

20030609

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP IN FACS, 2005-2007

**Funded by
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Prepared by: Farm Animal Council of Saskatchewan

*Corporate Membership to Support the
Farm Animal Council of Saskatchewan Inc.*

#20030609

April 2007

a)

SUMMARY

Established in 1992, the Farm Animal Council of Saskatchewan Inc. (FACS) is the first industry-supported, membership-based, non-profit, provincial organization established to collectively represent the livestock and poultry industries regarding animal care issues.

FACS provides straightforward accurate information about the way Saskatchewan producers assure quality and safety in the food they supply to world markets. FACS also works with producers to advance responsible animal care and handling practices in agriculture.

FACS makes every effort to:

- *advance producer awareness of emerging animal welfare issues*
- *assist producers in improving their animal handling skills*
- *provide information for greater public understanding and awareness about producer commitment to providing humane care to their animals*
- *encourage animal welfare issues are top of mind on industry boards and committees*
- *lobby for positive change regarding animal care issues*

The focus is on education . . . through tradeshow, presentations, newsletters, educational seminars, informative literature, a reference library, media involvement as well as addressing industry - specific questions and concerns.

A collective voice for animal agriculture specific to animal care issues, FACS believes in:

- *seeking consensus*
- *sharing information*
- *research and factual information*
- *perspectives from all commodities*
- *respect for others in the industry*
- *quality care for animals*
- *making a positive contribution to our world through animal agriculture.*

The monies received from the SBDF assist with core funding.

b)

TECHNICAL REPORT

BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

Over the past several years, there has been increased consumer concern with respect to the care of animals. This indicates the need to improve communications between the livestock sector and the general public. The primary function of FACS is to address and promote the responsible care and use of animals in the livestock industry through:

- a) Becoming the focal group of contact in Saskatchewan when issues are raised on animal care by both the public and extremist groups.*
- b) Providing education and information programs relating to animal care for producers, the general public and through the education system.*

- c) *Public relation activities to develop a better understanding of the value of animal agriculture.*
- d) *Development and collection of pertinent and credible information relating to animal care.*
- e) *Monitoring and participating in issues and legislation that affect animal care.*
- f) *Encouragement of research relevant to animal care.*
- g) *Encouraging industry to develop, promote and enforce responsible animal management.*
- h) *Soliciting industry funding to fully support FACS.*

A HIGHLIGHT AND SUMMARY OF THE MILESTONES AND MAJOR PROJECT ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS, PAPERS WRITTEN

RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Publications

Since 1992, FACS has published and distributed several hundred thousand newsletters and over one million information brochures to both producers and consumers. Our informative newsletter, *FACStracs*, has a circulation of approximately 3,500 copies and is posted on our website.

Educational Display / Presentations

Education plays a very important role in our mandate. FACS educates the public and producers through media involvement, various publications, meeting involvement, committee involvement, delivering presentations and by participating in provincial trade shows and exhibitions.

Our multi purpose trade show display can be tailored conforming to the target audience. As part of our display, we also have incorporated an interactive portable educational centre. This centre encourages hands-on involvement through a question/answer format.

In December of 2004 FACS added another interactive component to their public outings. A bike riding robot named **Faith the Animal Care Specialist**, was purchased after great reviews from the Saskatchewan Science Centre and the PFRA on their "bike bots". With one person acting as the robot handler, Faith can speak through voice activation and a hidden microphone allows the handler to hear what is being said to her. The unit is remote controlled and the handler can remain out of sight. Faith has been on several outings to date with a steady stream of requests for her appearance.



Examples of various exhibitions/trade shows FACS participates in: Crop Production Show, Western Canadian Livestock Expo, Canadian Western Agribition, Buffalo Days, Kinsmen Park and Prairieland Exhibition.

FACS Annual Meeting and Animal Care Conference

Held in mid December, the FACS AGM and one day animal care conference traditionally attracts participants from across the country. Showcasing a variety of leading presenters, each year this event offers a unique agenda that provides value to all industries.

Board Commitments

FACS is represented on several committees and boards including:

- AITC Board of Directors
- Canadian Western Agribition Agri-Ed Committee
- CWA Safety Around Livestock Committee
- National Farm Animal Care Council

FACStracs Newsletter

The distribution of the eight page FACStracs newsletter is approximately 3,500. This extends to members, key industry players, and the educational sector. After seven years, the FACS newsletter underwent a new design which better complements an eight page format.

Cattle FACS Brochures - (Funded by SBDF)

In keeping with the commodity specific management reviews, FACS has developed a series of bovine brochures entitled the Cattle FACS Series. Educating producers of the importance of recognizing and addressing treatable illnesses in their initial stages will provide producers with a more valuable end product. After consulting with the Auction Markets & Order Buyers Association as well as the CCA, Saskatchewan Stock Growers and Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders, FACS has developed these brochures addressing common ailments that can be treated at the farm level, thus reducing the number of downer and condemned animals filtered through the auction markets.

These brochures are inserted with checks, at the auction market level, therefore reaching most active producers in the province. As well The Alberta Cattle Commission requested permission to reprint the brochures and distribute them throughout Alberta.

This year nine new CATTLE FACS were developed. There are now 18 CATTLE FACS in total, and all are available on the FACS website.

Livestock Care Service

FACS, together with the Farm Stress Line, introduced a Livestock Care Service Line. This provides a producer helping producer service. FACS no longer has any hands-on involvement in this successful venture but it is still being operated through the FSL.

Animal Care Crisis Protocol

In the fall of 1998, pork producers were faced with numerous operational challenges as a result of an economic down turn in the hog market. This financial disaster affected all producers. During times of such hardship, FACS initiated action to establish a protocol for producers to ensure responsible animal management remains paramount. This is the first such protocol in Canada and can be used as a model for other commodities and provinces. Again, this was another visionary initiative never undertaken by another organization.

In 2002 and 2003 FACS organized several meetings (via initial request from Dr. Marshall Patterson) regarding establishing an Animal Care Crisis Protocol in Saskatchewan to deal with feed issues largely affecting the beef, bison and elk industry.

More recently (2006 - 2007) FACS has been active in developing a protocol for the feather industry.

The Really Remarkable Animal Farm

Launched in the fall of 1998, the Really Remarkable Animal Farm is a booklet targeted for grades 1-3. Working through Saskatchewan Education, this interactive educational resource has been distributed to every school in Saskatchewan. In addition, the Western Producer provided in-kind advertisement in three issues of the Western People Magazine, generating requests from over 900 people across Canada.

Although this booklet was distributed back in 1998, it still is today, one of our most popular resources and was reprinted in 2003 and is still be actively circulated.

Stock Person's School

Each May, together with support from the University of Saskatchewan, FACS offers a very successful Stock Person's School held at the WCVN in Saskatoon. The resounding success of this event has enabled the FACS/U of S partnership to continue on an annual basis. The objective of this one day school is to address specific issues, relevant to pasture riders and stock growers, which will improve their knowledge and performance level. This unique one-day school provides interactive opportunities for participants to learn from experts in their industries. Attendees benefit from a range of topics, from animal care issues to responsible use of pharmaceuticals.

Low Stress Handling Workshops

Over the years, FACS has provided the livestock industry with many highly sought after and respected presenters, such as Bud Williams. FACS first offered two Bud Williams - Low Stress Handling seminars in the 1990s. Hundreds of participants from across the prairies took advantage of these seminars finding it resulted in both economic benefits and was beneficial to the improved care of the animals.

Although Bud is no longer traveling north to conduct such worthwhile seminars, he has been working extensively with Richard McConnell teaching him a lifetime of techniques that have been proven successful to livestock handlers around the globe. Two Low Stress Handling Workshops were, once again, presented by Richard McConnell this year the first on March 12 in Swift Current and another on March 13 in Saskatoon.

Billboards

The Farm Animal Council of Saskatchewan (FACS) is in the process of re-launching our highly successful annual billboard campaign. Originally launched in 1996 and continued until 2001, our creative efforts attracted media and interest from across the province.

Initially, our goal was to promote to the viewing public that producers are responsible caregivers of their livestock. That goal still holds true today. However, although our past billboards creatively focused on the animals, our interest for 2007 is to focus on the producer.

INFORMATION OF BENEFIT TO OTHER PRODUCERS

Continuing Education

FACS' objective is to promote a better understanding of animal care and animal agriculture through education and information programs for the public, producers and through the education system. By continued involvement in commodity and breed organizations, participation in trade shows, media involvement, development of newsletters and educational pamphlets and by expanding our library, we will continue to educate producers and the general public as to the importance of the animal care issue.

Public perception regarding animal agriculture is of importance to all commodities. By being proactive rather than reactive, we feel industry standards will be above reproach.

a) PERSONNEL

The Farm Animal Council operates on a very limited budget. FACS is managed by a management team which essentially employs a part time Executive Director and an Administrative Assistant.

All projects are coordinated under the direction of the board (all voluntary) and administered by the Executive Director, Adele Buettner.

b) EQUIPMENT

N/A

c) PROJECT DEVELOPMENT MATERIALS

Included in this report are samples of the:

- *FACStracs newsletter*
- *FACS corporate brochure*
- *2006 Fence Lines to Corporate Board Rooms....Issues, Information and Action*
- *Copy of the Stock Person's School Brochure*
- *Copy of the Low Stress Handling Workshops Brochure*
- *A current membership list*
- *A current board of directors list*
- *Financial Statements*

d) PROJECT PHOTOS

N/A

e) BDF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

FACS has acknowledged BDF support & commitment in the following manner:

- *Included in information packages are lists of corporate supporters including SBDF*
- *Included in each issue of the FACStracs Newsletter*
- *Incorporated in numerous public presentations*
- *We acknowledge SBDF support through both signage and verbal recognition at our Annual Meeting.*





